# DON BLUTH'S TOON TALK

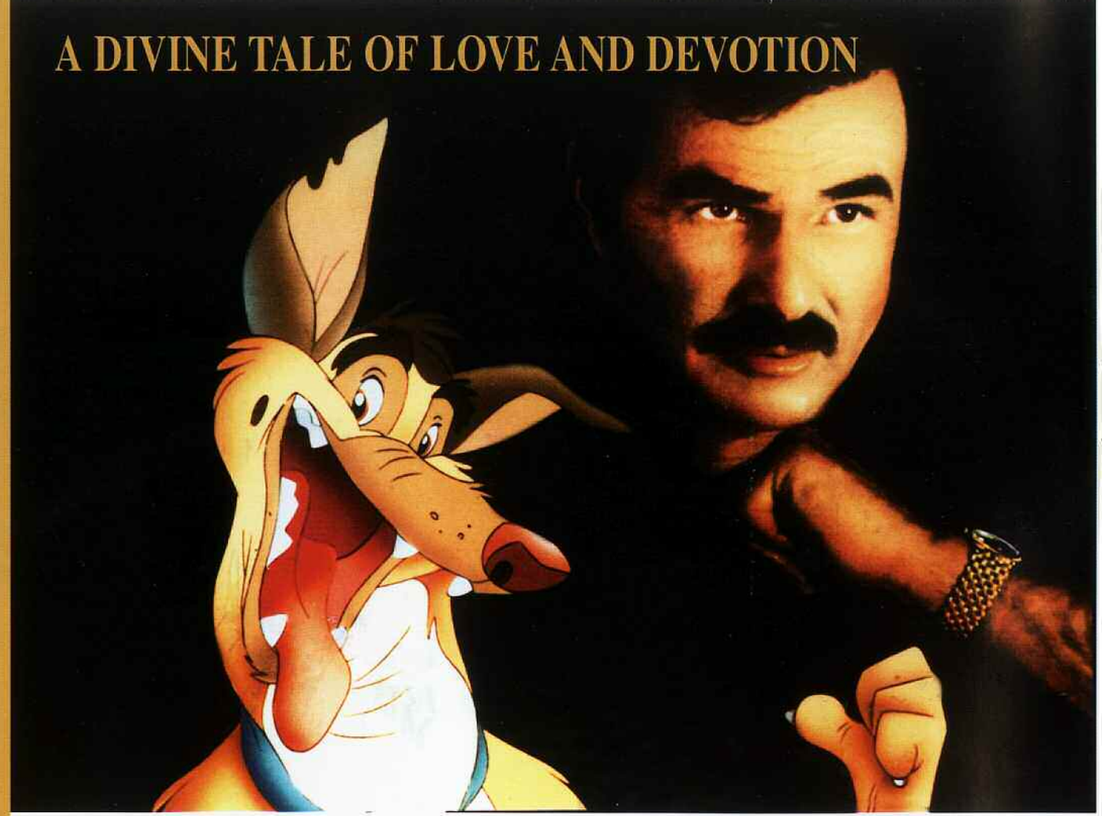
March 2001 Vol. 2 Number 2 Phoenix, AZ

## Burt Reynolds Gets Animated

## Marc Davis Disney Wizard

## Dragon's Lair Episode VI

$5.95




*Charlie, voiced by Burt Reynolds, is a stubborn canine, a mutt, a rover, and a con artist. The relationship set up between Charlie, Itchy, and Anne Marie, the three main characters, creates the dramatic tension that carries the movie. Itchy, voiced by Dom DeLuise, is Charlie's conscience that is forever prodding him to forsake his pursuit of revenge and settle for a more laid-back life. He is the outside voice of warning, while Anne Marie, innocent and trusting, is more of an inner call to repentance. The child is so devoted to Charlie that she makes it harder for him not to care.*

The studio on the Liffey burgeoned with employees; hungry employees who needed their paychecks to pay their bills and feed their families. They also yearned for something more. They wanted that place over the rainbow, that Valhalla, that project that would fulfill their spiritual longings as artists. At the time, we were three-hundred-sixty people strong. With ***Land Before Time*** drawing to a close, I searched desperately for our next production. "Be clever," I told myself, "but also be quick." The pressure of it all!

Around the same time, Steven Spielberg's negotiators appeared on the horizon, circling the camp, trying to make a deal with us to produce *American Tail 2*, and for less money than the first one. I hate suits! Sometime, somewhere, we had to gain our strength as an independent company, a company that would not be used as hired mere hands. So, as foolish as it may sound, we said goodbye to Fievel and Steven and jumped to the road less traveled. In, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*, Zero Mostel was cast in the role of a slave who longs for his own freedom. As he contemplates that blissful day when he will realize his dream, he suddenly has a miraculous epiphany. "If I were free, then nothing else would be free." This lesson came to me like a locomotive hitting a Schwinn bicycle; I, being the latter. All I ever wanted was to create something beautiful, but in our business, that involves big money and the moguls that go with it. I began to feel like a skinful of conflicting contraries, my genes impelling me to survive, to devour anyone who got in my way, while



# All Dogs Go To Heaven™

my will and my soul urged me to forgive. And so I did. Art is born of love, after all, never hatred. Sitting up, racking my brain for a compelling idea, I was suddenly whisked back in time to the fourth grade. Ms. Taylor held a book in her hand. She was smiling and inviting the class to read it. I remembered the title all right, *All Dogs Go To Heaven,* but what was it about? Having said goodbye to several good dog buddies during my fifty years here on Earth, I was truly intrigued. The next morning, the rising sun found me pounding on the library doors and prodding a sleepy librarian into locating the book. To my surprise she found a copy. I thanked her and dashed home to read it. As it turned out, it was neither a Newberry nor a Caldercott award winning Children story. In fact, it was not a story at all, but simply an anthology of dogs. "No matter," I mumbled to myself, "the title's good. We'll make up the rest."

# WRITING THE SCRIPT

*Above, Charlie, illiterate as a post, hopelessly fakes reading Anne Marie a story, but soon, Itchy will remind him he's getting it wrong since the book is on its side.*

*THE GIFTED CHILD*

*Anne Marie is not just any six-year-old girl. You see, she talks to animals; but even more unusual, they often talk back. With this in mind, she knows who is going to win the horse race, the dog race, and even the rat race. She truly is every gambler's dream come true!*

At first blush, you might ask, how hard is it to write a story and present it in a dramatic form with dialogue and visual descriptions? Or, you might ask, doesn't everyone understand the rules of quantum physics? If you sympathize with either of these two purgatories, truly you are an innocent bumpkin, and would do well to be instructed by experience. Writing in all of its formats is difficult! It taxes the inner self, it explores the soul, it reveals you to the world, and worse, it exposes you to yourself. That self where secret things lurk in the dark crevices of your unconscious, waiting to hatch out. Things that crawl up through the cracks and make themselves at home in the light. Other than that, writing is diverting as an ice cream social. The bottom line was that we needed a script, and fast. So I got my typewriter down from the closet. Still, just to be on the safe side, the company decided to hire writers from the United States. Our team, Monica and Stanley, came highly recommended and fit the budget perfectly. The kick-off story meeting was an assembly of illustrious story guru's, all employees, homegrown and eager to contribute. Prior to arriving, everyone was assigned some homework. Lucille Ball was on the list, a movie called *Sorrowful Jones* starring Bob Hope, and any books we could get our hands on by an author called Damon Runyan, particularly, the Little Miss Marker story.

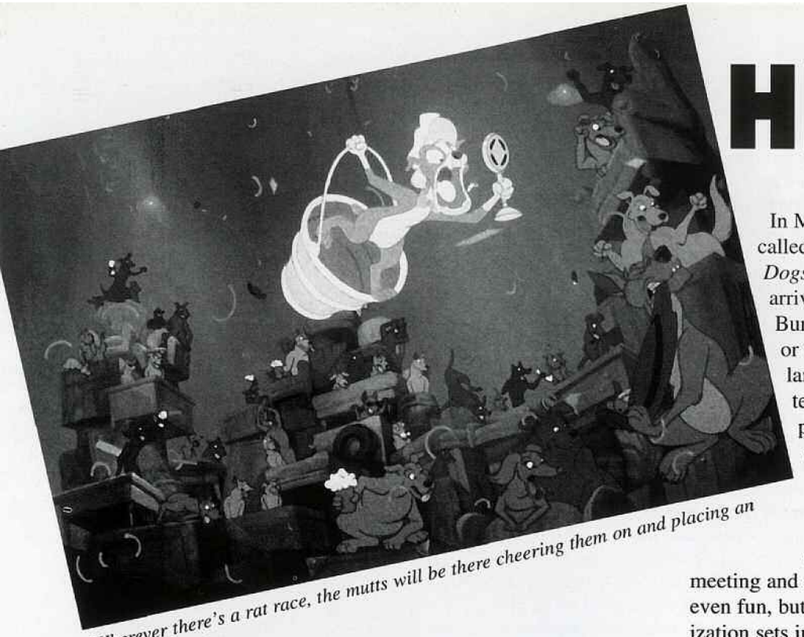
Monica and Stanley were brilliantly aerodite. The meeting lasted two hours. We scribbled the plot on 3x5 index cards, describing the three acts. Spirits soared and enthusiasm catapulted to dizzying heights. I penned a memo to Morris Sullivan and the board, reassuring them we had nailed the plot to our next movie. Six weeks later, the whole team was hopelessly deadlocked in a quagmire of frustrating confusion. Monica and Stanley commenced their daily yelling sessions as the sobering reality of our situation, "script-less in Dublin" griped the team. John Pomeroy, Gary Goldman, and myself, began to meet privately to read to each other from the best "How To" books. Donna Lee's, *The Magic of Screenplay Writing*, became our bible, then on to Syd Filed's *The Screenwriters Handbook*. It was like a revisit to dumbbell English class. We began to be familiar with terms like protagonist, hero's journey, dramatic need, rising action, climax, black moment, the confrontation, the resolve, etc. Gradually, small rays of light began peeking through the clouds of despair, but, as always, with all things creative, knowing something is missing, is one thing; finding that inspired element to plug-in is quite another. There is much to celebrate in the achievement of talent and we were weeks, maybe months away from the pop of the cork. Our two Hollywood writers, finally placed an 80 page, first draft on the table. Stubbornly chained to the viewpoint that it was a document rivaled only by the Lord's Prayer. They got paid and hopped the next British Airways flight back to Los Angeles. The "Thank You" for the memorable-time-in-Dublin postcards trickled in for about two weeks, then stopped. No more help from the pros, the eleventh hour was upon us. Three-hundred-sixty nail biters updated their portfolios as they watched for the little bunnies to leap from the hat. But, hark, just when things look their bleakest, who should appear on the scene, but Freddy, pushing those little buttons that always shape the events of my destiny. This time, the phone call came from London. It seems that our good friends and collaborators, Robert Towne and his wife, Louisa, whom I hadn't seen in years, were vacationing there, and it just popped into their heads to pay us a visit in Dublin. We're talking Towne, of *China Town, Grey Stoke, The Two Jakes, Tequila Sunrise* and heaven knows what else. Scriptwriter and doctor extraordinaire, thank you Freddy, was about to knock on our door. Now, if only I could convince him to diagnose the problem with our sagging story.

It was "lashing" rain when Robert and Louisa arrived at Phoenix House (the studio). We dried them off and primed them both with hot soup and soda bread from Sharon Fitzpatrick's kitchen. As I was thinking, where will I ever find the nerve to ask for his help, suddenly Robert just blurted out, "So what's your next movie? Is the script good?" "Perfect!" I replied. "No, I mean, not perfect, it's perfect that you should ask. It's called *All Dogs Go To Heaven* and we can't crack the story." Robert laughed and said, "Ok, I guess that's why I'm here. Maybe I can help; tell me your story." I did. After which, he starred at me for the longest time, then bowed his head and whispered, "Where's your bathroom?" I pointed and he left. A few moments later he returned rubbing his forehead. "Here's your story. Charlie, the dog, is bumped off by his good friend, Carface. He goes to heaven; is clever enough to steal back some mortal time, and returns to Earth to get his revenge. The complication comes when he uses a little girl to do it. He starts caring for her, which leads him to sacrificing his own life to save hers, and returns to heaven. Keep it that simple."

How easily he had nailed it. It left me thinking, and for many years, whenever I couldn't solve a problem, rightly or not, I retreated to the men's room for my epiphanies. And that's the truth; you can take that to the bank.

**Carface tells Charlie, "Get out of the neighborhood."**

# HEAVEN'S



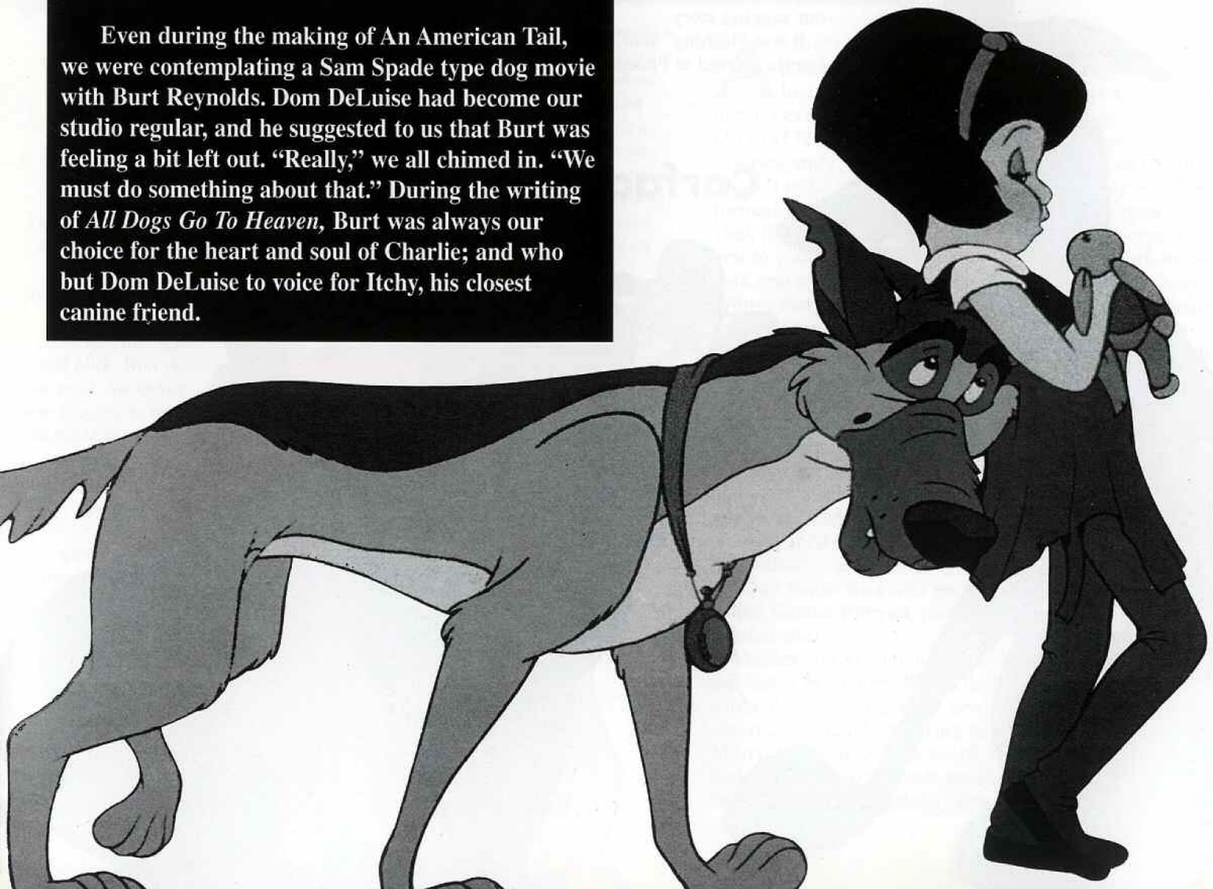
*Wherever there's a rat race, the mutts will be there cheering them on and placing an occasional bet.*

In Miami, Florida there is a small recording studio called Music Box Inc. For the kick off session of *"All Dogs,"* it was agreed that Burt would solo. Our limo arrived only thirty minutes prior to the landing of Burt's helicopter in our adjacent field. How the ten or twelve adoring fans waiting, and applauding his landing knew of his arrival remains a great mystery to this day, but Burt is always congenial and polite. He grinned and kissed the ladies and winked at their husbands, then began walking toward Gary and myself.

Now I have a word of caution for all you aspiring directors. Inevitably, you will be introduced to stars in the course of your careers, meeting and shaking hands with them is a no brainer and even fun, but, there will come a moment when the stark realization sets in that you are the director, and nothing can quite prepare you for that. Take care! Know your script well. Be sure you have a vision for the movie you captain, and above all: learn to back off and give the voice talent room to create their character.

## THE DOGGIE SOUL

**Even during the making of An American Tail, we were contemplating a Sam Spade type dog movie with Burt Reynolds. Dom DeLuise had become our studio regular, and he suggested to us that Burt was feeling a bit left out. "Really," we all chimed in. "We must do something about that." During the writing of *All Dogs Go To Heaven,* Burt was always our choice for the heart and soul of Charlie; and who but Dom DeLuise to voice for Itchy, his closest canine friend.**



# TWO VOICES

Burt put forth his hand, the grip was reassuring. His eyes twinkled with excitement and his broad handsome grin told me he had been looking forward to this moment, and was prepared. The script he carried was tattered and rolled. It was either well studied or had become a weapon against Florida's onslaught of insects. Then came the sound of Burt's voice like music low and mellifluous in a hardy greeting, "howdy guys, I'm looking forward to this." Within the hour, we were crammed into a small 5x5 un-air-conditioned sound booth facing each other with sweat dripping off our noses. Burt began "I've come up with a really neat-o dog voice. Let's see what you think. It's something like this." Suddenly out of his mouth came this dismal put-on cartoon character voice with absolutely zero believability. "Uh-oh," I thought to myself, "here it comes. Now I have to direct him." When he finally finished burbling, Burt glanced up, covered with sweat, pleased with himself, and said, "what do you think?" "Think? What do I think? I think no. That's pathetic. I think if we're paying for Burt we should get Burt, not the Warner Bros Tasmanian Devil. You are kidding right? Of course I didn't say that, any of that. Instead, I fumfered out the following, "how interesting Burt, a dog voice. Wow! That caught me right off guard. But as good as it sounded, I think I like your own voice better. I don't know! It's just that it's such an easy sell. So sincere! People love your natural voice. "Really", replied Burt, "I think this might be better. I like the dog voice. Trust me on this one"

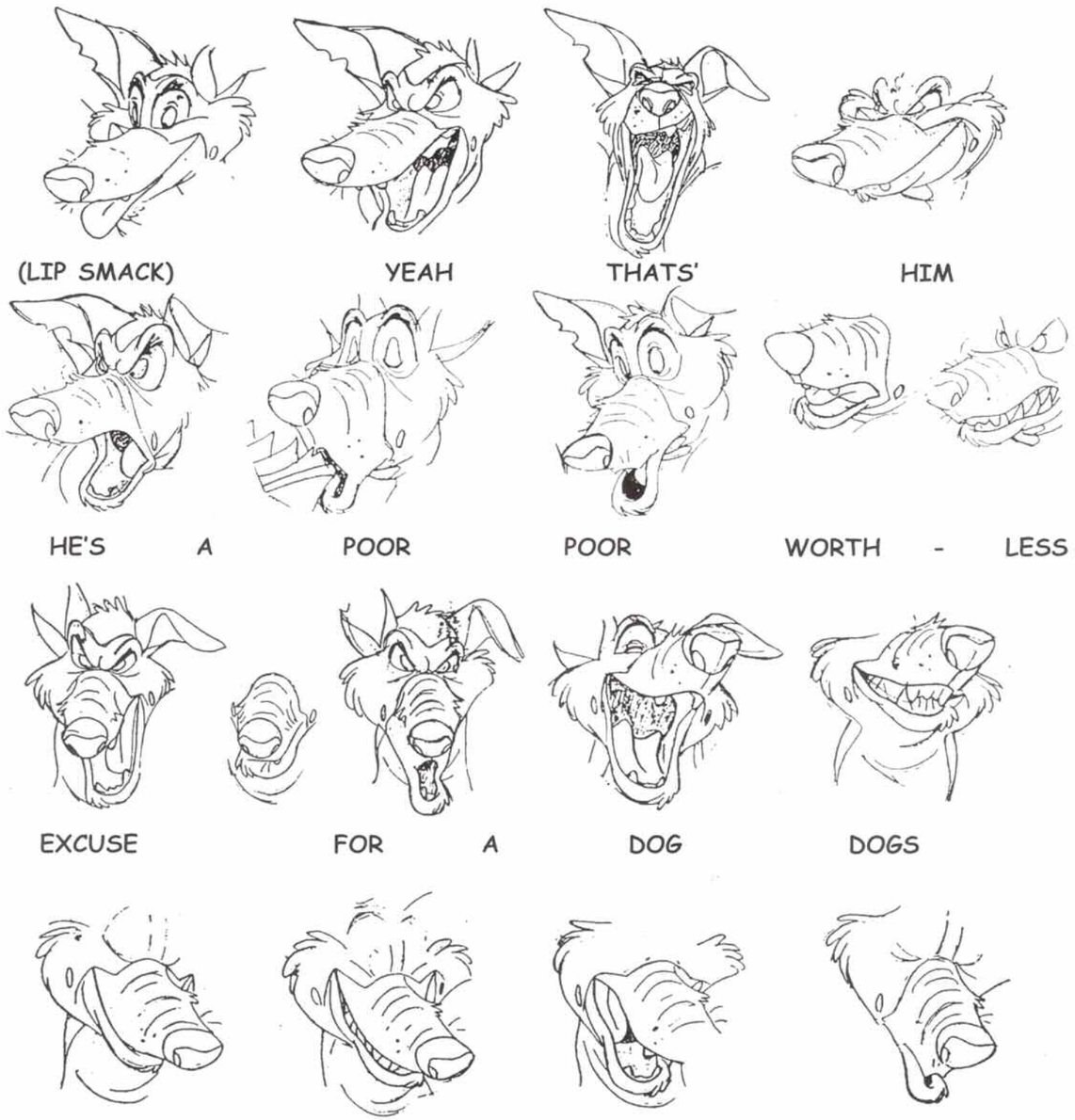
The session was ill fated. The tension built. Burt recorded it both ways, but the lines never came to life. We said our congenial good-bye, and Gary and I flew back to Dublin. "I'm calling Dom," I said. "He must know the key to Burt's genius." A week later, Dom, with the help of AT&T had a great laugh as I recounted the experience, "you need to get Burt and I together in front of the mike," he said.
"I promise it'll happen. It will be magic. Wait and see?" Wait indeed. Finding a window in both Burt's and Dom's busy schedules was as complex as solving the Cuban missile crisis. But at length and at last the date was set, and Gary and I flew

*Frightened Itchy, thinks Charlie is a ghost.*

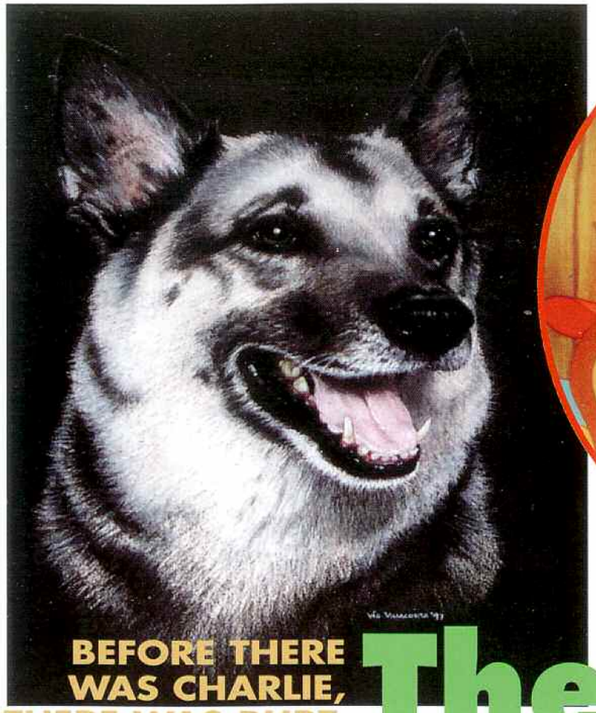
*The descriptive line above, so accurately describes these two super stars in real life that finding the character of Charlie and Itchy in* All Dogs To Go Heaven *was as easy as just watching them.*

to L.A with crossed fingers. The helicopters; the adoring fans; the phony dog voice, were all noticeably missing. The recording room itself was spacious, friendly and easily accommodated the two stars who now sat facing each other, each with his own microphone. "We don't know for sure what's going to happen here," said Dom grinning, "so just roll the tape so you don't miss anything."We rolled it. Dom began the hunt for Itchy's character; his voice became worried, tense, and unsure with a nervous laugh. The more he moved in that direction, the more Burt moved in the reverse. He sounded confident, like a guy who knew all the angles, had all the bases covered. I followed them on the script page for only a few minutes when, suddenly they were ad libbing, rewriting the lines, discovering new humor, then scribbling notes on the pages and rereading the whole scene over again. A zany buddy relationship was unfolding right before my eyes.
It existed on two levels, the real world, where Burt and Dom compete as if they were siblings, and the play world, where they maintain that same honesty. The kibitzing was hilarious. Dom, still in Itchy's character began giving Burt suggestions. "Hey Boss, maybe you could throw me that line again, this time with a real edge in your voice, like I was getting on your nerves." "Yeah Itchy," snapped Burt, "you are getting on my nerves. You've been nipping on my nerves for years. "You know what your problem is? You're too uptight. Loosen that collar. Chill out. By the time they miss the doe, we'll be dinin' on sirloin steak at Spago's." "But Charlie," Dom returned," Carface will kill us, I…I.. don't think this is such a good idea." "Don't think," snaps Burt, "I'll do the thinking, when you think, I get nervous. Okay?" And so it went.
They played and laughed their way through the script; three hours of solid recording time; and several reels of 1⁄4" tape. We could have made three movies with what the two stars delivered that day. Did I direct them? I think not. I stayed out of the way. It was sort of a family thing anyway.

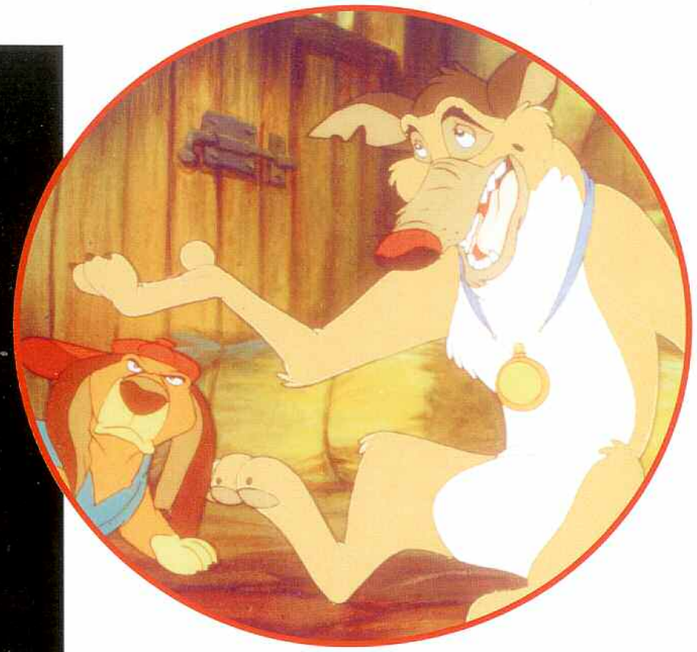
# DIALOGUE





BEFORE THERE WAS CHARLIE, THERE WAS BURT.

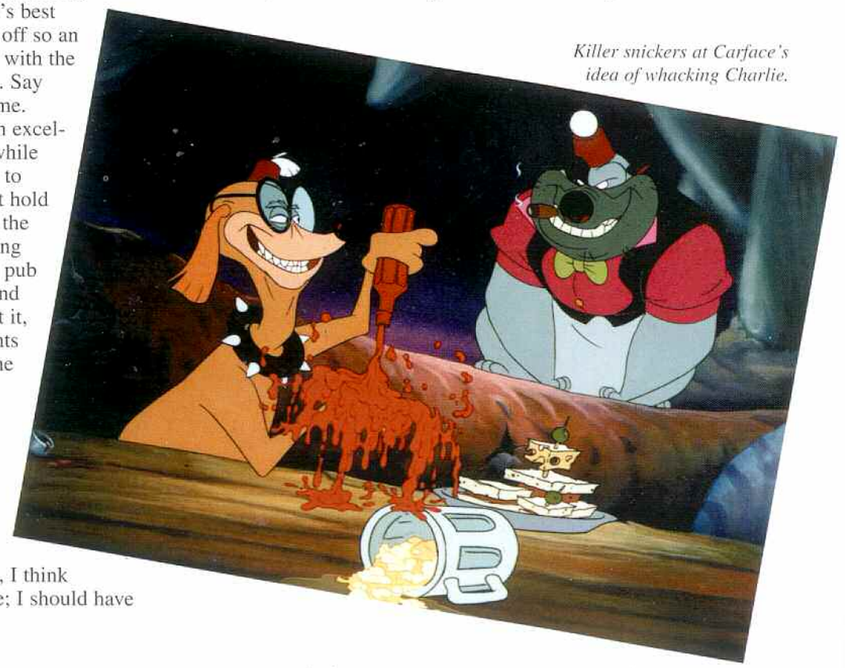


# The MODEL

It was during the *Space Ace* days that Burt, a lively German shepherd, wandered into our lives. Cathy Goldman found him hanging out with a pack of flea bitten, multifarious canines that wandered the L.A. riverbed foraging for food. Burt possessed an unusual affinity for people, a type of affection beyond man's best friend kind of stuff. Cathy loved him right off so an adoption took place. On with the shots, on with the collar, out with the fleas, off with the balls. Say goodbye to old friends, Burt has a new home.

At first, Cathy thought he might make an excellent guard dog. She left him in the house while she went to work; he chewed her new sofa to shreds. Even the fenced back yard couldn't hold this dog back. Burt would jump clear over the fence and disappear like a Houdini vanishing trick. He would soon re-appear at the Irish pub a few blocks away to sit under the tables and be with the lads. There was no doubt about it, Burt was a party animal, and when the lights went out at the Goldmans, so did he. Did he return on his own? Rarely. It was the twilight phone call from a raucous-noisy bar that did it. Mister Goldman, do you own a dog called Burt?

The studio's exodus to Ireland must have been the crucible of Burt's existence. I think the six-month quarantine nearly did him in. Myself, I would have given up at the castration milestone. Holy toledo, I think I heard him mumble one day, this is no life; I should have stayed in the L.A. river. Finally Burt got out of prison though, and Cathy brought him to the studio daily. In fact he became the mascot and from the crew, then three-hundred sixty-strong, he got at least one gentle pat on the head per day. Burt was the dog, the canine that inspired Charlie.



*Killer snickers at Carface's idea of whacking Charlie.*

# THE COLORS OF ALL DOGS

*Itchy springs Charlie from prison.*

*All the dogs place their bets onf the big rat race.*

*Charlie thinks if his luck holds out, he'll win the bet.*

*Carface, Charlie's rival plots his demise with Killer.*

*Charlie enters into heaven log with a paw print.*

*Charlie smooth talks a guardian angel to get back to earth.*

*Itchy fails to talk Charlie out of getting revenge on Carface.*

*The Dynamic Duo spot Ann Marie for the first time.*

*Ann Marie talks to animals, it's a gamblers dream come true.*

*Itchy gets excited about the upcoming horse race.*

*Ann Marie tells Charlie which horse will win.*

*Charlie promises to find Ann Marie, the orphan, a home.*

*Carface plots to send Charlie back to heaven.*

*Ann Marie finds her new home but Charlie wants her to help him with the next race.*

*An old friend crocodile rescues Charlie.*

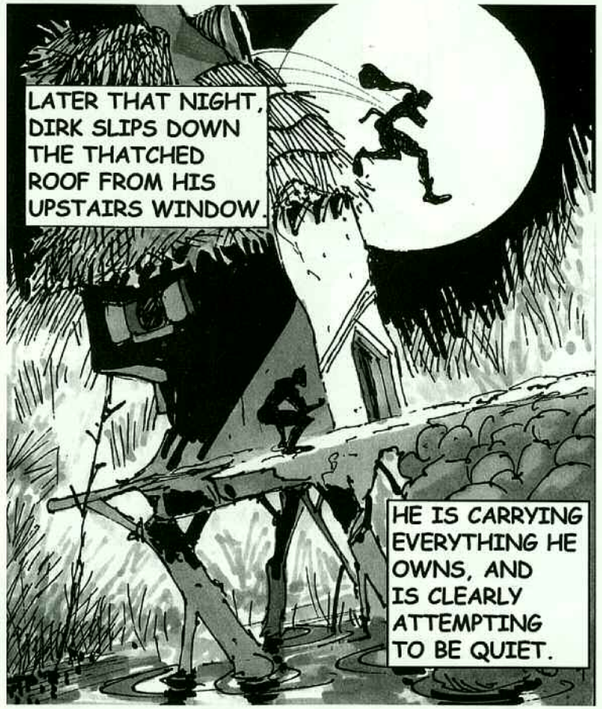
*To save Ann Marie, Charlie has to give up his life again.*

# DRAGON'S LAIR 3-D

Mention the name to almost any gamer over the age of twenty and most will say, I remember the arcade game that used a laser disk. Back in 1983, Don Bluth, Rick Deyer and John Pomeroy worked together to create *"Dragon's Lair."* It featured the adventures of Dirk the Daring, a rather clumsy and humorous knight. Dirk valiantly stumbled through the dungeon of an evil wizard, where death appeared around every corner, to save the object of his desire, Princess Daphane. People could not pass the machine without watching the promotional video, and a large majority played it at least once. The game has endured the last seventeen years and the story gets better with each telling, proving the story and characters to be as compelling now as they were then. Now in 2001, after several reincarnations of the original *Dragon's Lair*, we have the 3-D technology to give the game player a chance to once again play Dirk the Daring. With this technology, we can give the player complete control over Dirk, with the ability to fully explore the castle in his quest to rescue princess Daphne. In *Dragon's Lair 3-D*, we can take the player on an adventurous trek via a top notch, technically innovative 3-D game that will impress both the reminiscing and modern hard core gamer.

## THE MOVIE

Holy Toledo! It happened. The script for the *Dragon's Lair* movie is finally finished, and it's hot, I mean… it's funny… super funny. The visions of the movie are perking away in my head, keeping me up most nights. Hey, it goes with the territory. This is going to be cool… really cool!


LATER THAT NIGHT, DIRK SLIPS DOWN THE THATCHED ROOF FROM HIS UPSTAIRS WINDOW.
HE IS CARRYING EVERYTHING HE OWNS, AND IS CLEARLY ATTEMPTING TO BE QUIET.

IT'S NOT STUPID TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING . . . SOMETHING ENOUGH THAT IT'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR. TYRANNY SHOULD NOT STAND.

YOU WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE TYRANNY IF YOU STEPPED IN IT!

RONAN, LET GO OF ME!

NOT A CHANCE MAGGOT!

GET OUT OF MY WAY RONAN! IT'S MY LIFE!

YOU'RE JUST SMITTEN WITH THE HEROICS OF THE THING.



RONAN REMOVES HIS VEST CAREFULLY, HE SHAKES HIS HEAD SADLY.

IT ALWAYS COMES TO THIS DOESN'T IT ? O.K. IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES, AND I HAVE TO BEAT YOU SENSELESS. JUST TO SAVE YOU FROM YOUR OWN STUPID . . .

WHAAP

FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, BROTHER. YOU SHOULD STOP CALLING ME STUPID!

DIRK CATCHES RONAN AND LOWERS HIM TO THE GROUND.

HE FOLDS HIS BROTHERS VEST AND PLACES IT UNDER HIS HEAD. DIRK LOOKS WISTFULLY BACK AT THE COTTAGE, THEN . . .

WAVES GOODBYE.

WISH ME LUCK, BROTHER. I'VE GOT A DATE WITH DESTINY.

GATHERS HIS FEW BELONGINGS, AND DISAPPEARS INTO THE NIGHT.

AN ERRANT AND FOUL-LOOKING DUCK, AWAKENED BY THE COMMOTION INSPECTS . . .

QUACK QUACK

THE PRONE RONAN, PRODS HIM WITH HIS BILL, THEN NESTLES HIS FEATHERED BUTT ON RONAN'S FACE FOR THE NIGHT.



FAR AWAY IN ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST, A TRAVELING GROUP OF ACTORS IS ENTERTAINING THE TOWNSFOLK WITH FARCICAL PARODY ABOUT KING VRAXXIS WHO . . .

. . . IS PORTRAYED AS A FIERCE PUPPET, ANIMATED BY THE INCOMPARABLE SONYA, PUPPETEER EXTRAORDINAIRE, THOUGH MANY KNIGHTS TRY, NONE CAN DEFEAT HIM, AND THE CROWD BOOS.

THE KNIGHTS LIE IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR, AND PRINCESS DAPHNE IS STRANDED UP A TREE, -THE SITUATION IS GRAVE INDEED WHEN . . .

THE CURTAIN FALLS ON ACT II. ONCE MORE EVIL HAS TRIUMPHED.

DAPHNE DASHES OFFSTAGE. SHE QUICKLY ABANDONS THE PRINCESS ROLE AND. . .

BINDS HER HAIR TO HER HEAD . . .

UNDER A YOUNG MAN'S WIG TO EMERGE IN ACT III AS . . .



THE PROPHESIED YOUNG BOY HEIR, WHO . . .

. . . WITH UNLEASHED FEROCITY ATTACKS

THE TYRANNT KING CHOPPING OFF HIS HEAD WITH ONE BLOW, AND . . .

THE PROPHECY IS FUL-FILLED.

SOME OF THE LOCALS THROW MONEY, ONE THROWS A CHICKEN

DAPHNE THROWS OFF HER WIG AND DASHES FOR A WAITING HORSE

DAPHNE, WAIT, COME BACK

THE EQUESTRIAN SKILLS OF THE PRINCESS ARE RESULT OF YEARS OF TRAINING IN THE ROYAL STABLES . . .

HAVE THE OTHERS LEFT?
ALL BUT SIR DWAYNE. HE STILL HAS HIS FIRE EATING ACT.
TELL DWAYNE I'VE GONE AHEAD AND I'LL WAIT FOR HIM
AT THE BRIDGE.
BUT MISS DAPHNE, HE GAVE ME SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS THAT YOU . . .
IT'S TOO LATE, DAPHNE IS OUT OF EARSHOT AS IF IT MATTERS.
LATER . . .
DAPHNE SAID TO MEET HER AT THE BRIDGE.
CAN'T TALK NOW SONYA.
I MIGHT AS WELL BE TALKING TO MYSELF.
YOU HAVE THE PATIENCE OF A SAINT.
I HOPE IT LASTS UNTIL I FIND A MAN.
YADA, YADA, YADA.
Don Bluth
. . . to be continued

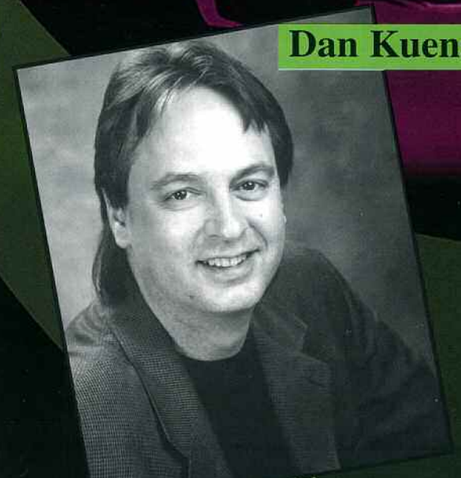


Zoom Cartoons Entertainment Presents

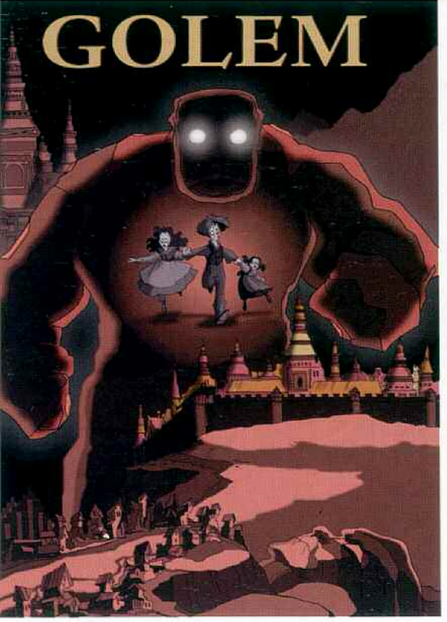
# Myths & Monsters™

A trilogy of animated theatrical features

## Dan Kuenster



**... is no rookie to the business. His experience as an animator, and storyboard artist is impressive, touching *Secret of NIMH, An American Tail; Land Before Time, All Dogs Go To Heaven, Rock-A-Doodle, and Troll In Central Park.* These days, Dan operates his own production company called Zoom Animation, with co-founder Suzan Deming Bernstein. Their clients, MGM Animation, FOX Animation, Nickelodeon, Bandai, Panasonic and Microsoft have all relied on Zoom's reliable team to get the job done.**




Zoom Cartoons is an independent animation studio dedicated to creating the next generation of beloved cartoons characters. Co-founders Susan Deming Bernstein and Dan Kuenster are widely recognized as innovative leaders in animation. Their combined resumes include prominent positions at Don Bluth Studios, Hanna-Barbera and 7th Level - encompassing feature films, Tamagotchi Video Adventures, *All Dogs Go to Heaven, Rock-A-Doodle, The Land Before Time* and *The Secret of NIMH*, Microsoft's revolutionary *ActiMates™ Barney™* CD-ROMs and cutting-edge websites PythOnline and Cartoon Network World.

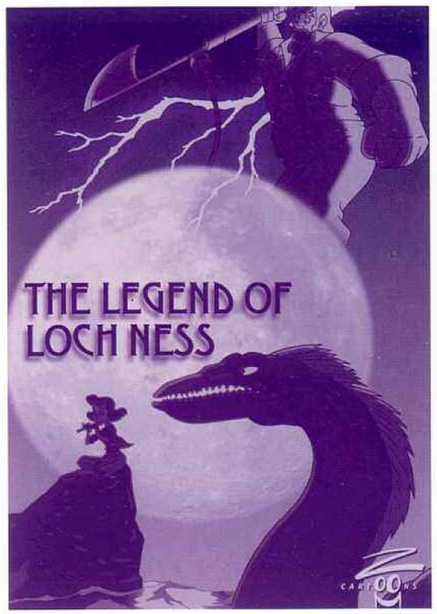
Zoom crafts animation of the highest quality for film, television, CD-ROM and Internet. Its client list includes MGM Animation, Fox Animation Studios, Nickelodeon, Bandai Entertainment, Panasonic and Microsoft. These companies have relied on Zoom's "animation architects" to draft production blueprints tailored to the unique demands of their projects and entrusted their key creative decisions to Zoom's producer-director team.

Zoom's original features, television series and webisodes showcase styles ranging from raucous primetime comedy to thrilling action-adventure in the tradition of Japanese anime.

The Myths and Monsters trilogy of feature films tells three of the most captivating and enduring tales of all time: the stories of the mysterious lake creature of Loch Ness, the enigmatic gentle giant of the high Himalayas and Prague's mystical man of clay that have lived in our imaginations somewhere between science and fantasy for centuries. Set in beautiful and mysterious places and enhanced by lush musical scoring, the Myths and Monsters films are conceived in the grand tradition of old-style animation, but with modern characters and narratives filled with suspense and excitement.

The first film in the trilogy, *The Legend of Loch Ness*, has been completely developed and is ready for production. In an original story inspired by different accounts of the famous Loch Ness Monster an American girl befriends the creature and saves her grandfather's Scottish village from destruction. Set in pre-Cold War 1950, the film evokes the invincible optimism of the post-World War II era – a time when Chuck Yeager had just broken the sound barrier, Jacques Cousteau was mapping the deepest ocean trenches and Edmund Hillary was poised to scale Mount Everest for the first time. The two protagonists, Betty McAllister and Henry Mills, standing on the brink of adulthood in this world of opportunity, courageously ensure the safety of the monster and the survival of her legacy into the future.

The second and third Myths and Monsters films are currently in development. The Yeti is based loosely on the classic allegorical fairy tale, *The Selfish Giant* by Oscar Wilde and on the life of the Dalai Lama. During a brutal snowstorm, a reluctant young boy chosen to be the leader of his country escapes the castle where he reigns and is saved by the reclusive Yeti who teaches the boy how to lead his people to freedom. Like the sea monster in *The Legend of Loch Ness*, the Yeti is discovered to be a benevolent creature, stigmatized by popular folklore, and eventually redeemed by his relationship with the boy protagonist. In *The Golem of Prague* hysterical prejudice forces people accused of practicing necromancy to be imprisoned in a ghetto in turn-of-the-century Prague. When a master conjurer dies under mysterious circumstances, his daughter and his apprentice sculpt a man of clay and bring him to life to free the city and avenge the conjurer's death.




The three films explore common themes of how the modern world chooses to perceive the occult. All three creatures are believed to be forces of evil because they lurk in the shadows and are so different from the townspeople themselves. Each film immerses the audience in the lore of an exotic and unfamiliar culture and then challenges humankind's natural xenophobia by showing each monster in a positive light through the eyes of a young heroine or hero.



# WIZARDS of the BIZ

***Don:*** Animation is always changing. With the new technology today, it's changing fast. It's not for the better. Let's talk about that. For years, you lived with what I considered to be one of the giants of the art. I'm speaking of Marc Davis. You've witnessed a lot of [illegible]. Do you have any advice for the student approaching a career in animation today?

***Alice:*** I was one of Marc's students at Chouinard Institute for two and a half years. I listened to Marc's lectures, I knew him well. In our early, married life, I remembered he would come home from work and check the TV guide to see if there were ballets, circus', or nature films. If there were, he would whip out his sketchbook and draw from the TV.

***Don:*** I recall reading that Marc was a self-taught artist. Is that correct?

***Alice:*** He went to twenty-three schools before he graduated from high school. One summer, he was in Kansas City, Missouri; his parents paid for him to go there, but the rest of his schooling, he paid for. For a short time, he went to the School of Fine Arts in San Francisco, until he ran out of money. So he would go out to the zoo early every morning. He knew the supervisor and he was flattered that an artist wanted to draw his animals. He would take Marc in, way in the back of the cages, so he could be close to the animals. Marc got to know all the caretakers; he was always giving them his drawings. They liked that. Anyway, after studying at the zoo all day, he would go to the library, and from books, study the skeletons and muscles of the animals he'd been sketching during the day.

***Don:*** What incredible passion. At Disney, I remember seeing him in "D" wing.

*continued next page*

***Alice:*** Next door to Milt.
***Don:*** Yes. During the *Sleeping Beauty* days. His flare for drawing the girl was incredible. No one could match him. There was also Cruella and Alice and Cinderella and on and on. He was brilliant at drawing the human figure.
***Alice:*** He drew it differently than most. I mean he approached it in a unique way. It always blew my mind to watch him. Sometimes he would start with the knee and build the figure around it, or it could be the hand, or a foot. I think it would be the point where he, more or less, wanted the viewer to look. He had a marvelous eye in regard to staging and Marc always directed your attention.
***Don:*** That's not just drawing; he wanted to communicate.
***Alice:*** Absolutely. The pirate ride at Disneyland is unique. It's an excellent example of focus. As you view the scene from the safety of your tiny boat, you are forced to look at specific things. But if you ride it today, they've made a lot of changes and I think it's just confusion.
***Don:*** They've wrecked it?
***Alice:*** Yeah, they blew it!
***Don:*** Alice, I go to colleges and speak to young students. They are full of hope and enthusiasm, but seem lost. Many know the golden age is gone. Computers and economics are pulling us all into unknown worlds.
***Alice:*** Yes, but even to operate a computer, you must have a knowledge of staging and design.
***Don:*** Amen. So if Marc were still here, what advice would he give to the animation students?
***Alice:*** That's easy. He would tell them to learn how to draw. That simple, because drawing Bugs Bunny well, isn't being an animator. To qualify, you have to learn the structure of the human figure and the animals. Then, you would do well to learn what the word "animation" means. It does not mean to merely move something about, but to give it life, or at least the illusion of life.
***Don:*** That's the challenge of the performing arts. Actors are always searching for believability. That's entertainment.
***Alice:*** I agree, but let's back up. Marc always said, "If you can't afford a sketchbook, just get a cheap tablet, maybe newsprint, and draw everything that catches your eye. Sit on a park bench and sketch the passers by. Drop the details; get the essence of their movement, or even their personality."
***Don:*** What was Marc's attraction in the ballet?
***Alice:*** The movement and the extreme poses. It demonstrates how far you can stretch or contort the body and still maintain equilibrium. It's about balance, even when the pose seems impossibly out of balance.
***Don:*** That seems to be the challenge of all of life, finding balance.
***Alice:*** Yes. Marc used to do a lot of wire sculpture. Milt too. Milt did some beautiful things.
***Don:*** I keep getting the sense that Marc and Milt were good friends.
***Alice:*** The closest. They seemed to read each other's minds. Marc would tout Milt as the best animator, but Milt would say it was Marc. Finally, Milt defined it this way: Marc is the best character designer, who also can animate. Well that settled it.
***Don:*** Were they competitive?
***Alice:*** Oh my yes. The last animation that Marc did was Cruella de Ville, Milt teased Marc saying, "I'll top you with the Medusa. Wait and see." When *The Rescuers* was finished, Marc, with a sad face went to Milt to say, "Nice try my friend, but you didn't do it."
***Don:*** Wow, fighting words.
***Alice:*** No, they both had a good laugh. By that time they were both pretty much at career's end. And Walt had moved Marc out of the animation department and into the theme parks. Milt was absolutely furious over this. He called Walt numerous times to get Marc back, but Walt was so pleased with Marc's contribution to the theme parks and The Pirates of the Carribean drawings that he turned Milt down.

***(For the rest of the interview, log on to www.donbluth.com)***

***Don:*** So Alice, let's talk about your art. What are you up to these days?
***Alice:*** Funny you should ask. I haven't done any painting or drawing in about twenty-five years. I got a call from a magazine called *Industry Standards*. This man said he had gotten my name from Disney Studios because I was a costume designer there years ago. He said, "We're asking a number of different designers if they wouldn't mind designing the same costume. We want to see a variety of approaches that would spring from such an exercise." "Sure," I told him. "I'll do it." Then he asked me to fax him a rough sketch by morning. Having received it, he called to say he would like to have a full color rendition in forty-eight hours. "You can e-mail it, or FedEx a disc." "Well, no pressure right?" So I went over to Marc's old studio and I sat in his chair for the longest time. Finally I said, "Marc, you've got to help me." I hadn't drawn anything in so long, I was nervous. Well I finally did the painting and e-mailed it back to the magazine. About a week later, I got a copy of the magazine, and low and behold, it was a two-page spread with my sketch by itself. What a surprise.
***Don:*** Not at all, it's like riding a bike; you never really forget how.
***Alice:*** When Marc and I were dating, he went to Europe, and I didn't want him to forget me because there were lots of other girls. So I wrote him letters, but the letterheads were my own designs of some very sexy ladies. The interesting part of this story is, he threw away the letters and kept the letterheads, so much for my talent as a writer. I've got them framed in the upstairs bathroom. I called them the "Ow" girls.
***Don:*** Dare I ask?
***Alice:*** Oh sure. When I was born, I had two brothers and a sister. My arrival put a kink in their act as the three musketeers. When my mother wasn't looking, I always got pinched. The first word I uttered, you guessed it, was "ow." That was my nickname.
***Don:*** So Alice, from your point of view, not Marc's, but your perspective, If you were talking to these young wannabe's today and you were discussing why art is important to their lives, maybe their culture and their families, what would you say?

***Alice:*** I would tell them it's one of the most difficult professions in the world to achieve any acclaim. But like any other discipline, you will have to give 150% at 500 horsepower. You will have to sensitize your ability to observe the world around you, the different age groups, and how they work with and against each other.
***Don:*** Are you saying get close to your feelings? Today, it's common to hide in a system or a routine.
***Alice:*** Yes, be yourself. Do not copy what someone else does. This is the thing I think is so sad in animation today. Students go part of the way, and then give up. It gets harder, and so what do they do? They quit. As soon as they do little cartoon characters bouncing along, they think that's animation, but really it's just a first step. Their staging is weak, their framing is clumsy and their emotional content amateurish. There are so many levels of achievement in understanding how to truly bring a drawing to life. When I enrolled in Chouinard, there was a two-year waiting list at the time. They had one opening in costume design. Well my goal wasn't that. I dreamed of becoming an animator, or a fine artist. I took the opening. The other decision to make, was just how good at costume design did I want to be? Ms. Chouinard's design class stipulated you learn children's clothing first, and learn to create your own patterns, then men's tailoring and patterns, then women's. Well, to make a long story short, when I graduated, I got a job designing braziers, girdles and lingerie. I was a bit disappointed, then get this…one day, Walt Disney has his secretary call me to ask if I'd like to do costumes for *Small World* - children's clothes.
***Don:*** It all came together then?
***Alice:*** Yes. Later, Walt called again to ask if I would design the *Pirates of the Carribbean* clothing. So you never know. The more you learn, the better chance of making a go in your profession. But it's strong artists who will get the jobs. You really must train yourself, that's paramount.
***Don:*** I wonder what kind of an animator you would have been?
***Alice:*** A good one. I'm sure of that, I'd go all the way. You know one of the things I loved about Marc; he always strived for excellence. Whenever we went on a trip, he always took his sketchbook. He drew everything.
***Don:*** I believe it. Ken Anderson also did that. Every vacation produced a pad of fabulous sketches. It was the custom. Maybe all the guys did it.
***Alice:*** No! Milt never did any drawings.
***Don:*** That's right, he fished.
***Alice:*** Did you know Milt's skill as a fisherman was legendary? He used to fish with the owner of the Ritz Hotel in Paris. He had his own casting pool in the country. He and Milt shared a great love for the sport.



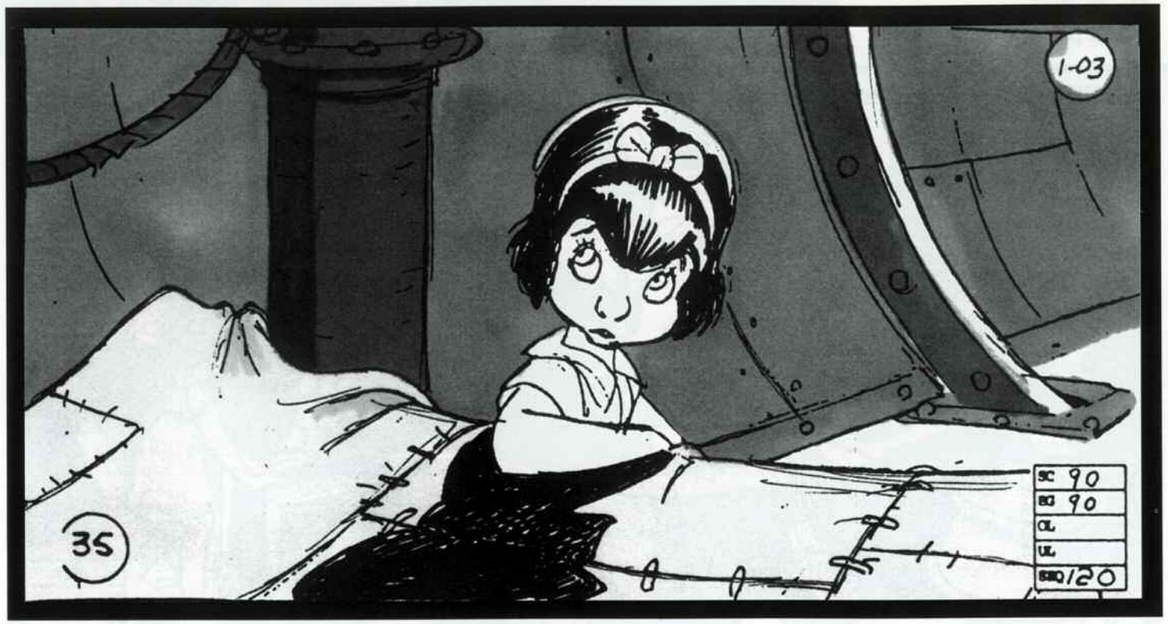
# Shop Talk *Boarding*

## CHARLIE: LET US TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ALL THIS

*The script is the heart of a good movie. The better the writing, the more compelling the story. A movie however is not just words, but pictures on a screen. With that in mind, the storyboard process takes on great importance. The clarity of which you call the shots is key to several artists climbing aboard with a unified vision' animators will need to know the character's dynamics. What each wants from the other.*

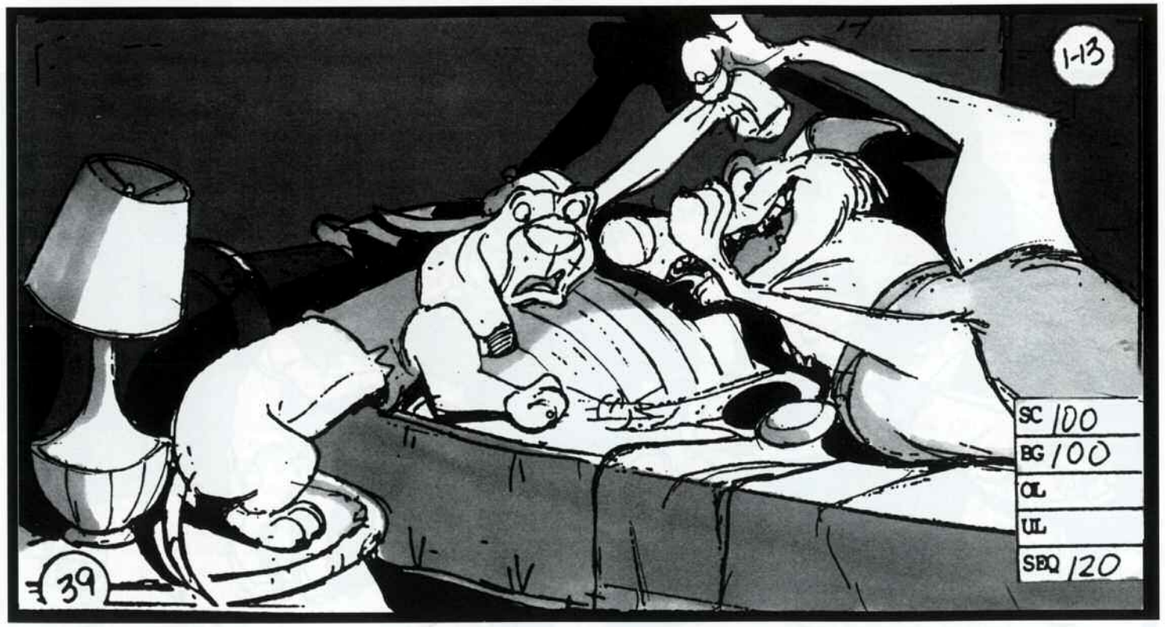
## CHARLIE: WHERE ARE YOUR PARENTS?

*In the above scene, Charlie has two agendas. The text, or what he says; and the subtext, what he means, but doesn't say. Subtext is always more interesting. Charlie's words lead us to believe he cares about Anne Marie's welfare, when in reality, he is conning her.*




**ANNE MARIE: I'M AN ORPHAN**

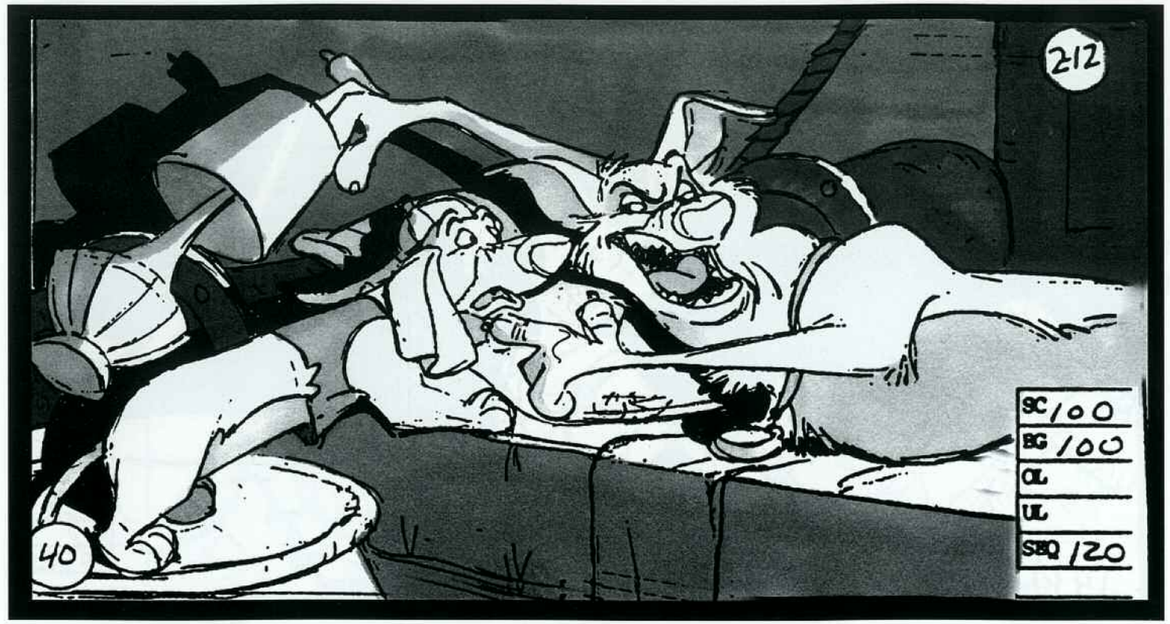
*Of course Anne Marie is unaware of Charlie's two-faced demeanor. She likes him from the start and will grow to cherish him as her best friend. Since the audience is in on to Charlie's deceit, they will sympathize with the girl.*




**CHARLIE: SHE'S AN ORPHAN**

*More intriguing still is the dynamic between Itchy and Charlie, friends to the end. Itchy finds himself being pulled in two directions at the same time. What to do? Go along with Charlie's cons and lies and thus be party to hurting Anne Marie, or tell the truth and betray his old pal Charlie...*






**CHARLIE: SHE DOESN'T HAVE ANY PARENTS! THAT SETTLES IT!**

*The "shtick," or "business" the characters perform when delivering their lines is the key to the Subtext message. Notice that Charlie is not merely talking to the girl and Itchy, but as he does so, he is stealing all her belongings and packing them in a bag. You could say he is just helping Anne Marie pack, but my guess is by nightfall it'll all be in a pawnshop.*

**CHARLIE: YOU KNOW, YOU'RE GONNA STAY WITH ITCHY. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?**

*In this panel, we get a clue as the extent of Charlie's corruption. The bag is jammed full of goodies for him, and he's delighted with the amount of the heist. He also intends to kidnap the girl. Will he take good care of her? Can she stay with him? Oh no! He offers her lodging at Itchy's place. This guy is not about to inconvenience himself.*

**ANNE MARIE: ANNE MAR . . .**
**ITCHY: (VO) NO!**

*When the camera cuts back to Anne Marie, she is totally unsuspecting; in fact, she's thrilled that Charlie is so kind. So why do we like this rogue, this scallywag, this deceiver? Mainly I think, because of Burt Reynolds's voice. It reassures us that it's all in good fun. Although he walks outside the law, he never deliberately harms a soul, that is the subtext.*

**ITCHY: (GIGGLES) SHE CAN'T STAY WITH ME! THIS HAS GONE TOO FAR!**

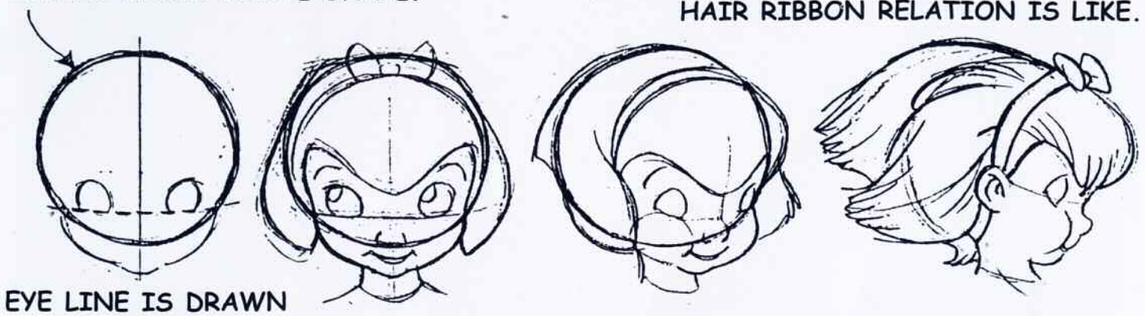
*When Itchy finally does speak up, it's up too late. The kidnap caper has a momentum of its own. Charlie ties the stolen goods to Itchy's back, he himself being well above the "mule" work. As far as the style of the story sketch is concerned, I tend to work clean, the edits, the character dynamics and the business are first and foremost, but I think camera angles and staging are all part of it.*



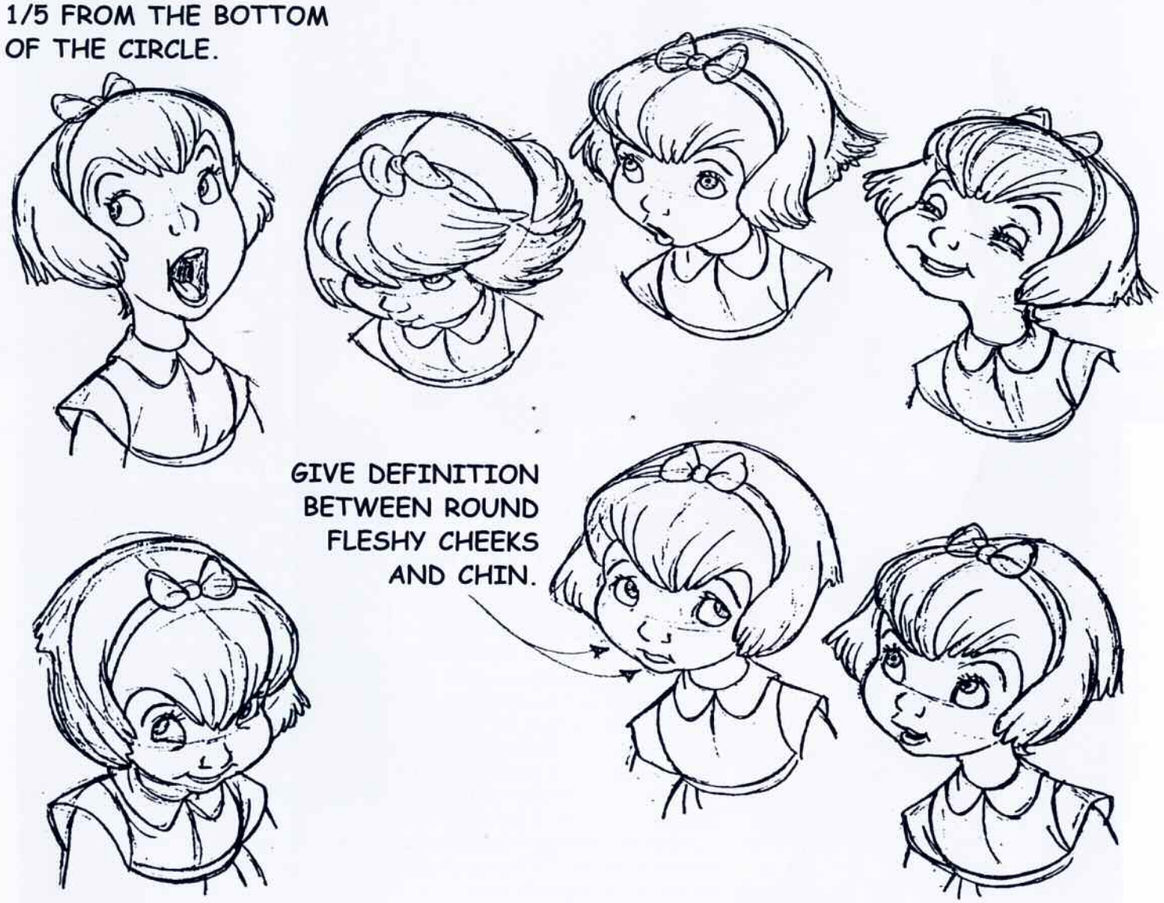
# JUNIOR TOONERS

START HEAD CONSTRUCTION WITH A BASIC CIRCLE SHAPE.

IF HAIR IS PULLED BACK OR BLOWN BACK, THIS IS WHAT THE EAR AND HAIR RIBBON RELATION IS LIKE.



EYE LINE IS DRAWN 1/5 FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE CIRCLE.



GIVE DEFINITION BETWEEN ROUND FLESHY CHEEKS AND CHIN.

# editor'sscoop

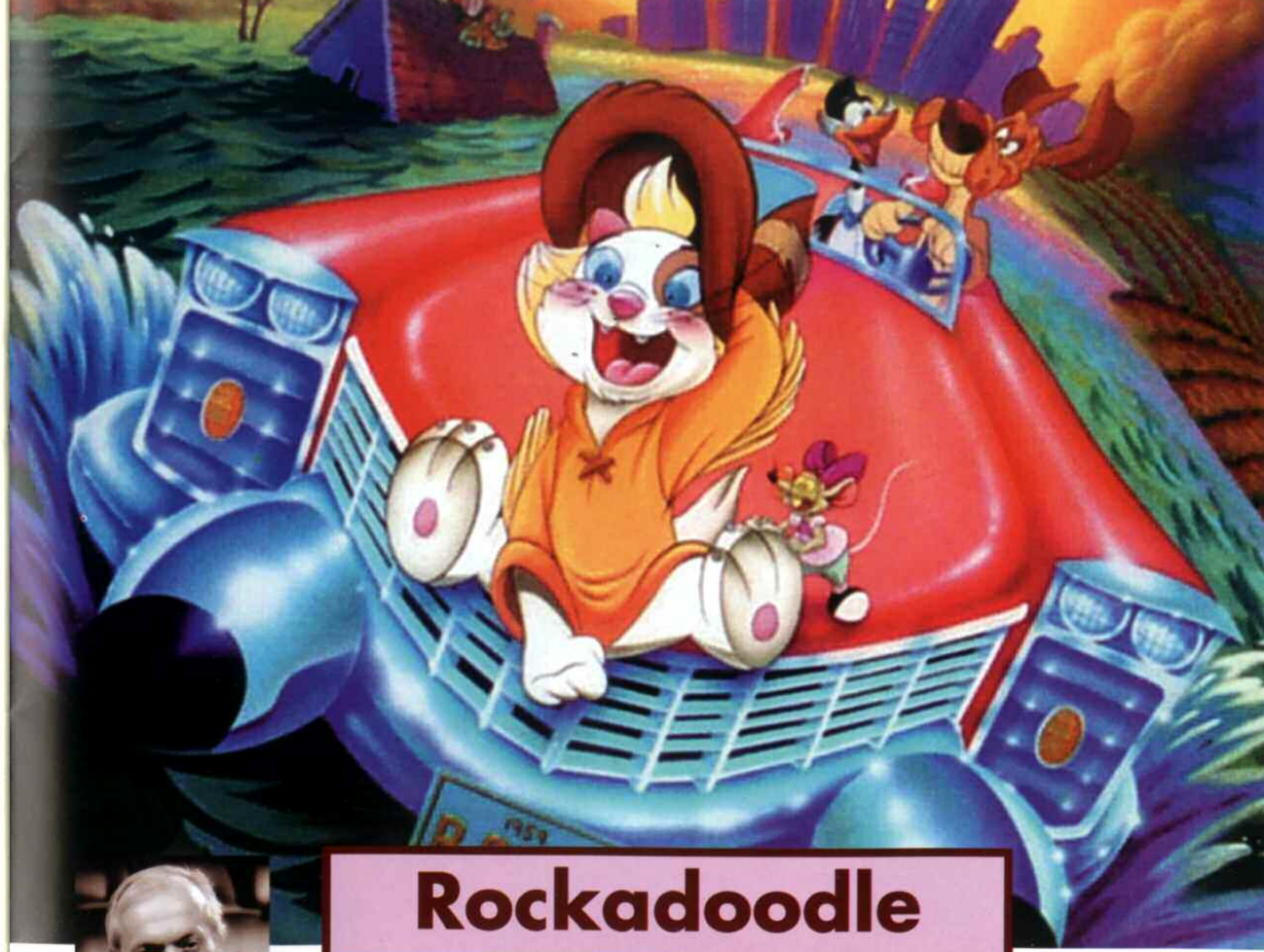
For those of you who have subscribed to *ToonTalk Magazine*, many thanks. We also appreciate your letters of support, as well as the suggestions that have contributed to the magazine's content. This publication completes the series of six. Thanks and congratulations to the staff that helped make it happen. It was a Herculean effort, and done well.

The work load on the *Dragon's Lair* movie is accelerating, and of course, the buzz of making another movie. I am now swimming in the workload, or should I say, drowning! Anyhow, what to do? Storyboard the movie, or publish six more issues of *ToonTalk*. That's a "no brainer." As much as I would like to continue to publish, I'm going to put the magazine on hold for a time. You'll be getting a letter to settle up what might be owed to you. David Monahan, our editor, can offer all six magazines, or a partial refund if you so choose.

This is not goodbye to the *ToonTalk Magazine* but as they say in Hawaii, Aloha. We'll be back!

The two seminars this year, San Francisco and Toronto, are still on board. Maybe I'll see some of you there. Check out our website for details, www.donbluth.com.





# Rockadoodle

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We're busy making plans to see you at the ComicCon.